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News Release

5/2/2023

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Watch for Motorcycles, Share the Road: Local media invited to Motorcycle Safety Awareness Month kickoff event

BOISE – May is Motorcycle Safety Awareness Month, and AAA, the Idaho Transportation Department, and other traffic safety partners are reminding drivers to watch for an increase in motorcycles on the road with the return of warm weather.

According to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, per vehicle mile traveled, motorcyclists are about 28 times more likely than passenger vehicle occupants to die in a crash.

“Idaho’s spring and summer months are absolutely beautiful, and motorcycle enthusiasts are naturally eager to take full advantage and hit the open road,” says AAA Idaho spokesman Matthew Conde. “But motorcycles are smaller and more difficult to see than passenger vehicles, and extra vigilance is needed to help keep riders safe.”

According to the Idaho Transportation Department, there were 554 motorcycle crashes in the Gem State and 32 fatalities in 2021, representing an 18% increase from the previous year. There were also 200 serious injuries – a nearly 30% increase from 2020.

“Idahoans look out for each other. It’s who we are. So, let’s do our part as drivers to check and double-check our blind spots and mirrors for motorcycles and to use our turn signals so motorcyclists can anticipate how they need to react to stay safe,” said Idaho Office of Highway Safety Program Manager Josephine Middleton.

ITD reports that the number of registered motorcycles in Idaho dropped from more than 56,000 prior to the pandemic to less than 49,000 in 2020. But that number is recovering, with more than 51,000 registered in 2021.

Tips for Drivers

- Yield to motorcyclists, especially when turning at intersections.
- Remember that a motorcycle’s size could cause you to misjudge speed and distance.
- Check all mirrors and blind spots before changing lanes or merging with traffic.
- Increase your following distance to give motorcycles more time to stop or maneuver in an emergency.
- Obey the speed limit and follow suggested speeds for curves and low-visibility areas.

AAA, the Idaho Transportation Department, the Idaho Coalition for Motorcycle Safety, the Boise Police Department, and High Desert Harley-Davidson are working together to better protect motorcyclists. **Media are invited to a special kickoff event at High Desert Harley-Davidson in Meridian on Thursday, May 4 at 11 AM in recognition of Motorcycle Safety Awareness Month.**

“Distraction continues to be a factor in many crashes. While most riders take steps to ride safely and protect themselves, cell phone use and other forms of distraction along with red light runners are causing far too many crashes involving motorcycles,” said Idaho Coalition for Motorcycle Safety Government Affairs Director Lane Triplett. “All road users need to become aware of the consequences of their bad habits and make positive personal changes.”

Cpl. Kyle Wills of the Boise Police Department added, “Whether we are on two wheels or four, whether it’s our daily commute or a road trip, we all need to look out for each other every time we use the road. More riders should not inevitably result in more crashes and if we all look out for one another and be patient, we’ll go a long way toward reducing crashes on our roadways.”

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